

We claim:

1. A golf ball having an indicia on its dimpled surface, the golf ball produced by the method comprising:

- 5                   providing an ink composition adapted for ink jet printing;  
                  applying the ink composition in the form of the indicia on a transfer medium using an ink jet printer; and  
                  transferring the indicia from the transfer medium to the dimpled surface of the golf ball.

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2. The golf ball produced by the method according to claim 1, wherein the transfer medium comprises at least one member selected from the group consisting of silicone, fluoropolymer, polypropylene, and combinations thereof.

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3. The golf ball produced by the method according to claim 1, wherein the transfer medium comprises a low surface energy material.

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4. The golf ball produced by the method according to claim 1, wherein the transfer medium comprises silicone.

5. The golf ball produced by the method according to claim 1, wherein the transfer medium comprises a fluoropolymer.

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6. The golf ball produced by the method according to claim 1, wherein the transfer medium comprises polypropylene.

7. The golf ball produced by the method according to claim 1, wherein the ink composition comprises a polymer resin.

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8. The golf ball produced by the method according to claim 1, wherein the ink composition comprises resin components.

9. The golf ball produced by the method according to claim 1, further comprising:

forming a protective coating over the indicia on the dimpled surface of the golf ball.

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10. The golf ball produced by the method according to claim 9, wherein the coating comprises a polyurethane.

11. The golf ball produced by the method according to claim 9, further comprising:

forming a primer coating layer on at least a portion of the dimpled surface of the golf ball prior to the applying step.

12. The golf ball produced by the method according to claim 11, wherein the primer coating layer includes a material which promotes at least one of absorption, adhesion and clarity of the indicia.

13. The golf ball produced by the method according to claim 12, wherein the material which promotes at least one of absorption, adhesion and clarity of the indicia includes at least one member selected from the group consisting of talc, amorphous silica, bentonite clay, and magnesium silicate.

14. The golf ball produced by the method according to claim 1, wherein the ink composition comprises a UV curable resin, further comprising:

curing the indicia after the indicia has been transferred onto the dimpled surface of the golf ball.

15. The golf ball produced by the method according to claim 1, wherein the transfer medium is a silicone-containing pad.

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16. The golf ball produced by the method according to claim 1, wherein the transfer medium is a silicone-coated sheet.

17. The golf ball produced by the method according to claim 1, wherein the ink composition is an aqueous-based formulation.

18. The golf ball produced by the method according to claim 1,  
5 wherein the ink composition is a non-aqueous-based formulation.

19. A method of applying at least one indicia to the dimpled surface of a golf ball, the method comprising:

obtaining an ink composition suitable for use in ink jet printing;  
10 forming an indicia receiving layer on at least a portion of the dimpled golf ball surface, the indicia receiving layer containing a material which promotes at least one of absorption, adhesion and clarity of the indicia; and  
printing an indicia on the indicia receiving layer using an ink jet printer.

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20. The method according to claim 19, wherein the indicia receiving layer comprises a polyurethane.

21. The method according to claim 19, wherein said material promotes  
20 absorption, adhesion and clarity of the indicia.

22. The method according to claim 19, wherein the material which promotes at least one of absorption, adhesion and clarity of the indicia includes at least one member selected from the group consisting of talc, amorphous  
25 silica, bentonite clay, and magnesium silicate.

23. The method according to claim 19, further comprising;  
forming a protective coating over the indicia.

30 24. The method according to claim 19, wherein the indicia is printed directly on the surface of the indicia receiving layer using the ink jet printer.

25. The method according to claim 19, wherein the indicia is printed on

a transfer medium using the ink jet printer, and the indicia is subsequently transferred to the surface of the indicia receiving layer.

26. The method according to claim 19, wherein the indicia receiving  
5 layer is a primer coating layer.

27. The method according to claim 19, wherein the indicia receiving layer is a cover.

10 28. The method according to claim 19, wherein the ink composition comprises a UV curable resin, further comprising:

curing the indicia after the indicia has been printed on the indicia receiving layer.

15 29. The method according to claim 19, wherein the ink composition comprises a polymer resin.

30. The method according to claim 19, wherein the ink composition is an aqueous-based formulation.

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31. The method according to claim 19, wherein the ink composition is a non-aqueous-based formulation.

25 32. A method of applying at least one indicia to a golf ball dimpled surface, the method comprising:

obtaining a UV curable ink composition suitable for use in ink jet printing;

printing an indicia on a dimpled surface of the golf ball using an ink jet printer; and

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curing the UV ink composition.

33. The method according to claim 32, wherein the indicia is printed on a transfer medium using the ink jet printer, and the indicia is subsequently

transferred to the surface of the golf ball.

34. A method of applying at least one indicia to a golf ball, comprising:  
obtaining an ink composition suitable for use in ink jet printing;  
5 printing an indicia on the surface of a golf ball using a drop-on-  
demand ink jet printer; and  
forming a protective coating over the indicia.

35. The method according to claim 34, wherein the drop-on-demand  
10 printer does not have electronic deflection of ink particles.

36. The method according to claim 34, wherein the resolution of the  
indicia is at least about 300 d.p.i. (about 120 dots per cm).

37. The method according to claim 34, wherein the resolution of the  
15 indicia is at least about 300 d.p.i. (about 200 dots per cm).

38. The method according to claim 34, wherein the resolution of the  
indicia is at least about 600 d.p.i. (about 240 dots per cm).

20 39. The method according to claim 34, wherein the resolution of the  
indicia is at least about 1000 d.p.i. (about 390 dots per cm).

40. The method according to claim 34, wherein the ink composition is  
25 an aqueous-based formulation.

41. The method according to claim 34, wherein the ink composition is a  
non-aqueous-based formulation.

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